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Modern homeopathy : its absurdities and

MODERN HOMEOPATHY

ITS ABSURDITIES AND INCONSISTENCIES

BY

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"Truth, crushed to earth, will rise again—
The eternal years of God are hers ;
While Error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies amidst his worshippers."

Bayard.

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P R E F A C E .

As a rule, the claims of Homeopathy are, without proper investigation, either enthusiastically admitted or contemptuously rejected. Many practitioners of the system are unable to give even an intelligent *résumé* of its doctrines, while very few of its patrons, though convinced in their own minds of its practical worth, have but the remotest conception of the theories upon which it is founded.

Though practitioners of the prevailing system cannot reasonably be expected to undertake an *experimental* test of Homeopathy, they certainly should investigate its claims to scientific recognition: if not with the hope of obtaining material to aid in constructing the temple of truth, that they may, at least, assist in clearing away the obstructions of error. Their patrons, too, have a right to expect that their inquiries concerning a system which has been received with so much popular favor, shall be met with some thing besides ridicule.

It is intended in this essay to present in a form which may be understood by any intelligent person, the reasons why the medical profession reject the pretensions of this so-called system of medicine; and, in order that those who have inclined to regard it with favor may satisfy themselves that the subject has not been presented from a prejudiced standpoint, or may pursue their investigations further than the limits of this paper will permit, quotations from various books and pamphlets have been freely indulged in. Aside from those definitely mentioned in the text, the following have been consulted:

- "The Organon of the Healing Art" (5th edition), by Samuel Hahnemann.
- "The Medical Index," by Boericke and Tafel, of New York.
- "The Encyclopedia of Pure Materia Medica," by Dr. Timothy F. Allen, of New York.
- "The American Homeopathic Pharmacopeia."
- "The Pharmacopeia Homeopathica Polyglottica."
- "The United States Pharmacopeia."
- "Homeopathy," by Dr. Worthington Hooker.
- "Medical Heresies," by Dr. Gonsalvo C. Smythe.
- "The Encyclopedia Britannica" (9th edition).

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MODERN HOMEOPATHY: ITS ABSURDITIES AND INCONSISTENCIES.

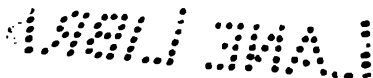
IN the year 1810 Samuel Hahnemann, a German physician, issued a work called *The Organon of the Healing Art*, in which he announced what has since been known as the "homeopathic" system of medicine.

Although graduated in medicine from Erlangen in 1779 he abandoned medical practice ten years thereafter, and devoted himself to chemical investigation and the translation of medical works. While thus engaged he claims to have had his attention arrested by the variable effects of the same medicines, and thenceforth to have entered upon a line of investigation which resulted in the production of the *Organon*. Subsequently, during his life, he continued to publish numerous essays, becoming more and more extravagant in his expressed views. Their extreme nature may be illustrated by reference to his theory that the common itch insect was "the only fundamental cause and source of pains of every variety." His alleged discoveries met almost universal condemnation and were severely ridiculed by the medical fraternity. For these or other reasons he led a somewhat nomadic life, acquiring neither wealth nor fame, and died at Paris in the year 1843.

Since his death his disciples have continued to publish the *Organon*, the sacred book of their faith,¹ with little or no modification. The following extract from that volume will serve to furnish the reader with an idea of its style, viz.: "Our vital force, that spirit-like dynamis, cannot be reached or affected except by a spirit-like process resulting from the hurtful influence of hostile agencies from the outer world acting upon the healthy organism and disturbing the harmonious process of life. Neither can the physician free the vital force from any of these morbid disturbances—*i. e.*, disease—except likewise by spirit-like, alterative powers of the appropriate remedies acting upon spirit-like vital force." (*Organon*, p. 69.)

By three hundred pages of this pseudo-philosophizing the author seeks to establish the following propositions:

1. *Similia similibus curantur* (or, translated, *likes are cured by likes*) is the *only* therapeutic law—that is to say, the only salutary treatment is that method according to which "a . . . disease is combated by a medicine . . . capable of creating in the healthy body symptoms most similar to those of the . . . disease." (*Organon*, p. 103.)



2. The totality of the symptoms is the *only* guide to the physician in the administration of remedies—that is to say, “all that a physician may regard as curable in disease consists entirely in the *complaints* of the patient, and the morbid changes in his health *perceptible to the senses.*” (*Organon*, p. 103.)

3. The only true method enabling the physician to select the proper remedies in disease is to prove them upon persons in health—that is to say, every drug, before it may be properly employed in treating disease, must first have been administered to a person in health, and the symptoms produced thereby recorded, in order that their similarity or dissimilarity may be compared with those from which a patient may be suffering for whose relief a drug is sought to be administered.

Hahnemann, moreover, taught, as deductions from the foregoing principles, that, in any given case, one drug only should be selected and administered; and, also, that local or external applications should never be made, as they were not only in no sense beneficial, but liable to interfere with the progress of a homeopathic cure. Although, admitting the truth of the principles, the deductions were certainly logical, they will be forthwith dismissed from further consideration with the remark that, practically, in these respects, Hahnemann's disciples have, uniformly, gone counter to his instructions.

There remains to be mentioned another feature of homeopathy, which, though undoubtedly the most characteristic of the system, is, nevertheless, in no way an essential part of it. Reference is made to the custom of administering drugs in infinitesimal quantities. So peculiar to the system is this practice that the adjective “homeopathic” has come to be used, in ordinary conversation, as synonymous with the terms “exceedingly small” or “minute.” Still the true homeopathist is entirely free to use drugs in as large quantities as he may see fit, provided only he proceeds according to the rule, *Similia similibus curantur*. Why he does not avail himself of this privilege will become apparent as the subject is more fully considered.

The minute subdivision, or so-called “dynamization,” of drugs, was an after-thought of Hahnemann; it was, in reality, a plank thrown out to rescue from destruction his system of medicine, which, otherwise, would have been shipwrecked by its inherent defects. That so absurd a measure has floated it for three-quarters of a century is evidence that Hahnemann did not, at least, over-estimate the credulity of the human mind.

The author of Homeopathy was not the originator of the doctrine *Similia similibus curantur*. Three hundred years before his time, it was announced in the same words by Paracelsus, the “Prince of Quacks,” who also declared it to be the *sole* law of cure. As early as 400 years B. C., Hippocrates, the father of medicine, made the observation that some diseases are best treated by similars. Nevertheless, upon this doc-

trine, as a corner-stone, Hahnemann erected the superstructure which he christened *Homeopathy*.

It may be supposed that this term was adopted by Hahnemann to distinguish his system from one already existing, known as "Allopathy." This is not true. The term "Allopathy" was also invented by Hahnemann. It was by him, as it has since been by his disciples, applied to the prevailing system of medicine. The careless acquiescence of the profession in its use has led to a popular belief that they practise an exclusive system properly designated by that term. On the contrary, there is not now, neither has there ever been, an *allopathic* system of medicine. When a practitioner thoughtlessly admits that he is an *allopath*, he simply means that he is a member of the *regular* profession, and not an advocate of any *exclusive* system. Medicine, as practised by *regular* physicians, rests upon the accumulated knowledge of the centuries, and, as distinguished from others, might properly be called the *rational* system of medicine. *Rational* physicians do not claim to have discovered any law of universal application, either of similars or contraries, according to which drugs act in their influence upon the human system. Many persons believe that the *regular profession*, on the one hand, and homeopaths, on the other, have each a definite, though diverse, plan for the treatment of the various recognized diseases. This is in no sense true, of the former at least. The *rational* physician is expected to be familiar with the effects of drugs, when administered, and to apply that knowledge to the control or modification of the destructive processes which are active in the morbid condition of the system called *disease*.

The *Old School* is another term derisively applied to the regular profession by the adherents of exclusive systems. The word "old" is not here used in the sense of age. Its age cannot be denied. It has witnessed the birth of every exclusive system, and the death of most of them. Age, to any science, is an element of strength; but by the use of the phrase "old school" it is intended to create the impression that the *regular* profession is dominated by antiquated ideas, and refuses to be influenced by the light of modern investigation. This charge is so manifestly false as to be clearly malicious. The regular profession, having no pet theory to maintain, hails with enthusiasm every new discovery in the domain of medicine. Nay, more: it appropriates to its own use every truth, no matter how or by whom discovered. It forgives the errors of discoverers, and writes their names, with honor, upon its annals. Thus, exclusive schools, robbed of whatever truth they possess, wither and die. The bitter enmity of homeopaths, as well as the separate existence of their system, depends upon the fact that they have been unable to impress upon the profession that Hahnemann discovered a single valuable truth.

In describing the operation of the law of *similia*, Hahnemann tells us that nature, unaided, cannot throw off disease; that medicines are,

therefore, essential ; that by administering to a patient a drug which has the power of producing in a healthy person symptoms similar to those from which he is suffering (the greater the similarity the more appropriate the drug), an artificial disease or drug-disease is substituted for the natural disease. This *drug-disease*, though somewhat more intense, he affirms that nature can easily throw off. (*Organon*, pp. 74 and 75.) Why nature can so easily cope with and destroy the stronger of the two elements, while she sits powerless in the presence of the weaker, he does not deign to inform us.

Let this doctrine be fully understood. It means that a drug which will produce in a person who is well certain symptoms will cure a disease which manifests itself by similar symptoms. We are informed that the doctrine is that *likes are cured by likes*, and not that *the same is cured by the same*. It is not proper, therefore, to maintain that the fatigue of a long walk will be overcome by a short walk, or that the effects of gormandizing will be removed by eating a little more. The distinction, however, is almost too refined for the ordinary mind to grasp. For example: a physician is called to the bedside of a patient suffering from an overdose of opium. If the patient be exact in the description of his symptoms, and the physician familiar with the effects of drugs, opium will, certainly, according to the law of similars, be the drug selected ; but if a certain quantity of opium be sufficient to cause dangerous symptoms, what person possessed of ordinary common sense can be induced to believe that a little more will remove them? If it be objected that opium-poisoning is not a disease, it may be answered that the *condition* demands treatment as much as any *disease*, and what is to be the guide but the symptoms if *similia* be a law ! In any case, if a disease or a drug cause the same or similar symptoms, and one be superadded to the other, it is hard to see how any effect can be produced other than an aggravation of the condition. Indeed, it was the observation of this fact which led Hahnemann to adopt the infinitesimal dose, one which, fortunately, is so small that if Nature, unassisted, is able to overcome the malady, no additional burden is thereby imposed upon her. More fortunate still for suffering humanity is the fact, that, in the presence of alarming cases, the modern homeopathist abandons his theory of similars and falls back upon the scientific discoveries of *rational* medicine.

Instead of supporting his doctrine by an appeal to the results of carefully conducted experiments, Hahnemann resorts to a species of reasoning, plausible in its nature, but founded upon the loosest analogies. One illustration by which he aims to establish his law is that the rising sun obscures the light of the brilliant planets. Another is that the fear caused in the mind of the soldier by the sound of the enemy's cannon is overcome by the beating of drums. Still another is that grief is forgotten when we hear of another's greater misfortune. These are so very

absurd as to call for no comment. He also calls attention to the fact that some people cure a frozen member by the application of frozen "Sauerkraut." Inasmuch as the custom of rubbing a frozen limb with snow is sometimes still cited as a proof of the operation of the law, it may not be improper to devote a few lines to pointing out in what the fallacy consists. In the treatment of frost-bite the object is to restore the circulation of the part. If this is accomplished too suddenly it is attended with great pain and sometimes results in serious inflammation. The school-boy knows this, and, avoiding the fire, thrusts his tingling fingers into his pockets and trusts the more moderate warmth of his body. No one would think of packing a frozen limb in ice or snow, but the patient having been removed to a warm atmosphere, friction is applied to the injured part, the snow being used simply as a medium to prevent the too rapid return of the warm blood.

Opium will control pain. Quinine will reduce fever. Alcohol and ammonia will relieve faintness. Now if *similia* be a law, opium ought to cause pain in the healthy; quinine, fever; alcohol, faintness, etc.; but this is not the case. Hahnemann, to be sure, states that cinchona bark caused in him the symptoms of ague, a disease it possesses a remarkable power to cure, but by repeating the experiment upon himself, anybody may safely prove that the case of Hahnemann must have been highly exceptional.

So much for the doctrine *similia similibus curantur*. If it be *true*, it is certainly a most wonderful medical discovery. It is the corner-stone upon which Hahnemann founded his system. It is the very keystone of the homeopathic arch. It is to homeopathy what gravitation is to the celestial bodies. If it be *false*, this so-called system of medicine, deprived of its cohesive principle, must fall apart and crumble into atoms.

Homeopathy does not attack disease, but addresses itself to the amelioration or removal of the symptoms attendant upon it. Says Hahnemann: "When the symptoms are removed the patient is cured." (*Organon*, p. 68.) By symptoms are understood those manifestations of an unusual character which accompany disease. They vary greatly in their significance. There are those for a knowledge of the existence of which the physician is wholly dependent upon the statements of the patient. Such are the situation and nature of pains, and, in fact, of all sensations whatever. These are known as *subjective* symptoms, and by rational physicians are regarded as having but little relative value. When individual peculiarities are taken into consideration, and the difference dependent upon age and disposition, the little importance attached to this class of symptoms is readily understood. There are other symptoms which the physician must observe for himself. Such are: the color and condition of the skin; the force and rhythm of the pulse; the steadiness of the gait, etc. While these, called *objective* symptoms, are much more sig-

nificant than those of the first class, even their value varies within wide limits, according to the acuteness of observation or accuracy of judgment of the physician. Another class of symptoms are those elicited with the aid of instruments and methods of precision. The clinical thermometer and chemical reagent cannot lie. The speculum, the microscope, the stethoscope, the ophthalmoscope, and the laryngoscope furnish methods of investigation, the results of which are of themselves the least liable to mislead.

Homeopathy, however, reverses this order and directs particular attention to the morbid sensations of the patient. "All that a physician may regard as curable in diseases," says Hahnemann, "consists entirely in the complaints of the patient and the morbid changes of his health perceptible to the senses." (*Organon*, p. 103.) These form the totality of the symptoms and are the "only indications" to guide the homeopathic doctor in the selection of a remedy. (*Organon*, p. 70.) No account is taken of the causes of symptoms or the pathologic conditions underlying them. No matter how different such causes or how diverse such conditions, if only the symptoms "perceptible to the senses" be similar, the remedy is the same. The alarming symptom may be a conservative, nay, even a vicarious process of nature; nevertheless it is to be removed in order to effect a cure.

To the *rational* physician, on the other hand, symptoms are but the outward manifestation of some perhaps unseen cause. To discover this cause has ever been his task. "They fancied," says Hahnemann, "they could find the cause of disease, but they did not find it, because it is unrecognizable and not to be found, since by far the greater number of diseases are of a dynamic (spirit-like) origin and nature; their cause, therefore, remaining unrecognizable." (*Organon*, p. 18.) But Hahnemann to the contrary notwithstanding, the zeal of the regular profession in this field of investigation has been abundantly rewarded. The causes of many, if not most, diseases, are as well known to-day as other scientific facts. The *prevention* of disease has thus become as much the province of the physician as its cure.

If the totality of the symptoms is the only guide to the physician in his selection of remedies, the art of medicine is reduced to a charming simplicity. Anatomy, physiology, and chemistry are not the foundation-stones of a medical education, but, at the most, useless accomplishments, while the study of pathology is absolutely a waste of precious time.

But many homeopaths will inform their patrons that the sciences of anatomy, physiology, chemistry, and even pathology, are taught in their colleges; that they are deemed of as much importance by them as by the regular profession; that they differ with the "old school" in its method of treatment only. Now, it is admitted that these sciences are taught, or at least assumed to be taught, in homeopathic colleges; to ex-

clude them would be suicidal, for their importance is fully recognized by the people. The public, indeed, demands that every physician shall be instructed in them. It is not denied that many calling themselves homeopaths are fairly well instructed in these departments of knowledge; but that they are in no way essential to the practice of medicine, if the totality of the symptoms is the true index for treatment, is most emphatically affirmed. The very object of the study of these sciences is to enable the physician to discover the nature and seat of disease; but if, by cancelling its signs and disturbances, disease itself is removed, why concern ourselves with its internal causes! The business of the physician is not to pry into the secrets of Nature, but to cure his patients of their ailments as "easily and promptly" as possible. Hahnemann reproved physicians for their efforts to discover the hidden causes of disease. Dr. Sharpe, of Rugby, England, one of his most eminent disciples, says of him, that he passionately rejected pathology and morbid anatomy. (*Encyclop. Brit.*, 9th ed., vol. xii, p. 127.) Early homeopaths, consistently, designated the time devoted to these important branches in regular colleges as wasted, and those of the present day cannot conceal the fact that many prominent members of their school are outspoken in their denunciation of pathology. (*American Homeopathist*, March, 1878.)

Undue regard for symptoms is, unquestionably, one reason why homeopathy gains so much popular favor. The greatest recommendation a doctor can possess, in the opinion of many, is abounding sympathy. Nothing renders him more unpopular with sensitive patients than an apparent disinclination to listen to a detailed account of aches and pains, of tingling and numbness, hot flashes, sounds in the ears, etc. Morbidly sensitive and very conscious of their unpleasant feelings, these seem to them of the greatest importance. They do not understand the object of many inquiries addressed to them by their medical advisers. Questions as to their age and habits, their whereabouts and family history, seem to them to be prompted by idle curiosity. Mentally, they resent what they regard as an impertinent inquisition. Such questions, however, if truthfully answered, reveal facts upon which the physician may lean with confidence, while subjective symptoms are very frequently the fancies of a disordered sensorium, and of little value in furnishing the information necessary to enable him to afford the desired relief.

With *similia similibus curantur* as the rule for treatment, and the *totality of the symptoms* as the guide in the administration of the remedy, the only subject demanding study in order to fit a person to practise homeopathy is a knowledge of the power of medicines to produce peculiar morbid sensations. "These," says the *Organon* (p. 103), "are recognized most distinctly and purely by testing medicines upon the bodies of healthy persons." This method of procedure is denominated "proving."

Without doubt, much information valuable to the physician may be obtained by carefully observing the effects of drugs upon persons in health. Indeed, this is one, though by no means the only or most important of the methods employed by the regular profession in determining the physiologic action of drugs. To be of any scientific value all such experiments must be conducted with the utmost care. The temperament, the physical and mental condition, and the environment of each subject must be attentively considered. The source of the drug must be ascertained and its purity determined. The dose must be measured with exactness. The changes in feeling experienced by the patient should be received with great caution. As far as possible, instrumental methods should be resorted to to determine changes in the organism. No just conclusion can be formed except after a vast number of experiments and a complete classification. Even then only such effects are to be attributed to the drug as are of an unusual character and are present with a considerable degree of uniformity.

As homeopaths depend solely upon "provings" for the information concerning medicines so essential to the practice of their system, surely these precautions should be observed with more than ordinary faithfulness.

Fifteen pages of the *Organon* are devoted to this important subject. According to that preëminent homeopathic authority, drugs are to be administered "in moderate quantities" (p. 120), but to "disclose the wealth of their latent powers, are to be taken in highly attenuated state." The totality of the symptoms that a drug is capable of producing "is brought near perfection only by manifold experiments upon individuals of both sexes and of various bodily and mental constitution." (Pp. 127-131.) Excesses of eating, drinking, mental and bodily exertions are to be avoided during as many days as the observation of the effects of the drug requires. This time varies with the drug taken, some extending their influence as long as seven weeks. If these directions are complied with, "all sensations observed must be regarded and noted as properly the effects of the drug, notwithstanding they are such as the prover has experienced, spontaneously, some time before." (P. 127.) In order that nothing may escape attention, the prover is "to assume various postures, in order to observe if the sensations are increased, lessened, or made to vanish by motion of the affected part; by walking in the room or in the open air; by standing, sitting, or lying; or whether it returns when he assumes the original position. He should also observe if the symptom is changed by eating, drinking, talking, coughing, sneezing, or some other bodily function. Particular notice should also be taken of the time of the day or night at which each symptom usually appears, in order to discover its peculiarities and characteristics." All sensations, no matter how trifling, experienced by persons differing in age, temperament, and surrounding, following doses of every conceivable size, extend-

ing over periods varying from hours to weeks, are noted and mustered without classification, and the drug is "proved."

The collection of symptoms attributed to many of the more commonly used drugs is enormous, in some cases exceeding 2000.

To illustrate the nature of the observations, the following symptoms, attributed to the taking of one dose of one drop of the third dilution of the tincture of red onion, are appended: "Crawling in the right nostril, as before sneezing; must frequently blow thin mucus out of the nose (one hour after). Swelling of the cheeks with toothache. Pressive toothache in the right upper and lower back teeth, with the inclination to bore the tongue into and suck them, which relieves, lasting an hour, after travelling against the northwest wind (fifth and sixth days). Slight pressure in the right back teeth on going into a warm room. At breakfast (with warm cocoa) painful; relieved by cold water (the seventh day). At breakfast the back teeth pain from eating bread, so that only soft food can be taken. A pressive pain remains for some time afterward. Towards noon, the pain disappears on the right side and settles in the root of the left eye-tooth; the gum around the tooth is inflamed; the pain frequently ceases suddenly and commences in an instant in a right back tooth; in the eye-tooth it is pressive, growling; cold water, cold in general, relieves (the eighth day). The pressive toothache comes on after walking against the north wind, is relieved by poking and sucking with the tongue; is much aggravated on eating warm soup, and disappears after a swallow of cold water; always the same after repeated experiments. Pressive pain in the left eye-tooth disturbs the sleep, the cheeks feel swollen (ninth day). During sleep, feeling as if back teeth were too long with some pain; disappears on rising, two nights. Dull pain below the breast-bone, more to the right side on moving in bed, evening at ten (after five minutes). Pain below the sternum on stooping (morning). Distention of the abdomen before dinner. Lower abdomen very heavy as if it were pressed upon, before and after standing; disappeared after bathing (ninth day). Numb sensation in the left elbow-joint, worse on slight motion (forenoon). Numb sensation in left elbow-joint with headache. In right elbow-joint pain as from a blow (seventh day at noon). Sleep disturbed by toothache. During sleep, teeth feel too long." (*Ency. Pure Mater. Med.*, vol. i, pp. 146-159.)

Most of these symptoms came on "after travelling against the northwest wind." Would it not be more sensible to attribute them to that cause, especially if the teeth were decayed, rather than to taking a drop of a highly rarefied tincture of the harmless onion?

Following are a few of the symptoms attributed to *smelling* of the thirtieth dilution of aloes. "In the afternoon of the fourth day he works with a will without a mid-day nap. Toward the evening of the fifth day he is uncommonly aroused by inspiriting joyful news. On the

eighth day he has cold feet all night; sleeps little, though ordinarily he is sleepy evenings. This same day a pustule which had formed on the edge of the upper lip, left side, healed. On the ninth day he had extremely painful tearing stitches in the second joint of the left forefinger. On the tenth he has a longing for juicy food, fruit, but not for water. On the eleventh he has canine hunger, and after a meal becomes sleepy. In the afternoon of the twelfth day he is uncommonly thirsty, has a swashing and gurgling in the bowels, audible to him, and in the evening is inclined to work. On the thirteenth day he has a pale, sickly look. In the afternoon of the fourteenth, on walking in boots, he gets a pain in the right little toe, as if frozen. In the morning of the fifteenth he lies till towards eight o'clock. On the seventeenth, the concave edges of the teeth, which have had a yellowish cast for many days, seem sharp and hurt the tongue." (*Ency. Pure Mater. Med.*, pp. 163-192.)

Symptoms attached to the same drug range from the most frightful, as "a frequent desire to kill himself by stabbing his heart through and through," to the most insignificant, as "she walks further than she needs to do." They are often contradictory, as "inclined to gaiety" and "sad and depressed," "constipation" and "diarrhea." Again, all the commonly used drugs seem capable of producing the same symptoms, as "headache, nausea, vomiting, etc., etc." Substances which when taken in large quantities are positively inert, are declared, when administered in minute subdivision, to be capable of producing a long list of morbid sensations.³

In response to the urging of their master, most homeopathic doctors have engaged zealously in collecting this kind of material. So industrious have the provers been that it takes ten large octavo volumes, of about 700 pages each, to contain the accumulated wisdom. This work is denominated the *Encyclopedia of Pure Materia Medica*. It is edited by Dr. Timothy F. Allen, Professor of Materia Medica in the Homeopathic College in New York City, and, judging from the list of its subscribers, is the authority "par excellence" among practitioners of that school. What little there is of value in it, however, lies buried under such a mass of trash as to be entirely inaccessible; for indiscriminately mingled with the legitimate effects of drugs are sensations experienced long after they have been eliminated from the system: those attributed to inappreciable doses, and those due to circumstances entirely independent of the medicine.

But suppose it is true that every drug, though taken in minute quantities, is capable of exciting a train of symptoms peculiar to itself; if now a drug be administered to a person, it ought to be possible to recognize it by the symptoms it produces. This, indeed, seems to be a philosophic test. There is one instance upon record in which it was tried. In this instance sets of ten vials were prepared, one of which contained the

thirtieth dilution of some drug, and the other nine, plain alcohol. Of seventy-three homeopathic doctors who were induced to make the trial, only ten reported; and of these, nine selected the wrong vial. This was what might have been expected as a result of guessing. (*Proceedings of Milwaukee Academy of Medicine*, 1880.)

According to Hahnemann, upon this doctrine of "proving" "depends the life, death, sickness, health of human beings, the success of the art of healing and the welfare of all coming generations." (*Organon*, pp. 124, 125.)

If a drug having the power to cause certain symptoms should be administered to a person in whom they had been already excited by some other cause, the reasonable conclusion is that there would be an aggravation of the condition. Hahnemann admitted this and observed (what is evident) that "the smaller the dose, so much the smaller and shorter the aggravation." Now, if Hahnemann had been laboring in the cause of science, he would have accepted this phenomenon as the best evidence of the fallacy of the proposition, *similia similibus curantur*; but he had assumed to found a system of medicine, and it was too late to retreat. Instead of abandoning *similia*, then, he cast about with his usual versatility for something wherewith to sustain it. In the administration of drugs in infinitesimal quantities he certainly conceived a plan worthy of his genius; for whatever their power for good, they were, at least, positively incapable of aggravating the symptoms or of forming any obstacle to a cure by natural vigor.

This method of administering medicines has become the leading characteristic of homeopathy, and, though everybody understands the homeopathic dose to be a small one, very few have the remotest idea of its extreme attenuation.

In order that this subject may be fully appreciated, a little space will here be devoted to a description of how homeopathic medicines are prepared.

Of such substances as are supposed to be soluble in alcohol, a strong tincture is first made. This is called the "mother tincture." For making the dilutions the "centesimal scale" was introduced by Hahnemann, and is that most used. Its principle is that the first potency must contain $\frac{1}{100}$ part of the strength of the remedy; the succeeding potencies each $\frac{1}{100}$ part of the preceding one. (*Pharmacopœia Homeopathica Polyglottica*, p. 24.) Dry substances, the virtues of which cannot be extracted by alcohol, are first reduced to as fine a powder as possible. They do not seem, in this form, to have received any designation whatever, but, from analogy, might be called the *mother powders*. The first trituration is made from these powders by mixing them with milk-sugar, the centesimal scale also being used. Hahnemann stated that the third trituration of these insoluble substances, by a method hitherto unknown to

"potency"; yet some homeopathic medicines in common use contain even less of the drug than would such a pellet, for experiments made by various persons, including homeopaths, have demonstrated that the arbitrary law announced by Hahnemann, that certain metallic and insoluble substances, triturated to the third potency become soluble, is false in fact. All liquid potencies of such substances, therefore, contain absolutely no medicine whatever.

"The genuineness, purity, and strength of homeopathic pharmaceutical preparations," say Boericke and Tafel, the oldest homeopathic pharmacists in the United States, "cannot, as a rule, be demonstrated by, or are unsusceptible to, the ordinary chemical tests; hence, these qualities in them cannot be determined by the usual methods of analysis applied to drugs or chemicals." Admitting this premise, none will assume to dispute their conclusion that the "reliability [of these medicines] depends solely on the character and reputation as to probity of those preparing and putting them up." (Boericke and Tafel, *Medical Index*.)

Hahnemann insisted upon the efficacy of the high dilutions, and named the thirtieth as the one to be commonly used. (*Organon*, p. 179.) He accused those homeopathic doctors who continued to use the low dilutions, of lack of knowledge, and distinctly said that if their medicines were homeopathically selected they would do more harm than good. (P. 181.) The homeopathic school is greatly divided upon this subject; some use only the high, and some only the low dilutions; but that there is a demand for the former is evidenced by the announcement of Boericke and Tafel, already referred to, that "their thirtieth having given good satisfaction, they have carried a large number of drugs up to the $\frac{1}{200}$, $\frac{1}{500}$, and even the $\frac{1}{1000}$ potency." They say, however, that most homeopathic doctors use the third dilution of the tinctures, and the sixth of metallic substances. In the reports of cases treated homeopathically, the potencies range all the way from the second to the $\frac{1}{200}$, while inquiry of those selling these preparations reveals the fact that the popular demand is for third, fourth, sixth, and seventh.

It must be admitted that some homeopaths have introduced, in the preparation of their medicines, what is known as the "decimal" scale, the ratio of dilution being ten instead of one hundred. Let us also admit, for the purpose of argument, that homeopathic mother tinctures are double the strength of those used by the regular profession, as is claimed by some. According to Boericke and Tafel, the dose of a homeopathic tincture is two drops, and according to the United States Pharmacopeia, the standard in regular medicine, the dose of by far the greater number of official tinctures is ten drops. Now, even if a potency prepared according to the *decimal* scale be administered, a patient must take, by actual computation, 2500 doses of the third, to get as much of

the medicine as would be contained in one dose of the corresponding tincture as administered by regular physicians.

The power of the high dilutions does not depend, apparently, upon their attenuation, but seems to be imparted to them by the rubbing and shaking they undergo. (*Organon*, p. 128.) Great attention has always been bestowed by homeopathsists upon this method of developing medicines. According to their authorities to-day the following rules are to be observed: In liquid preparations, each successive attenuation is to receive "ten powerful downward strokes of the arm." Of dry substances, each potency is to be ground in a mortar for exactly eighteen minutes and scraped together again for just twelve minutes. (*American Homeopathic Pharmacopeia*, pp. 16, 17, and 18.) If the force thus expended in making medicines is not lost, but is, in some way, stored up in the preparation, nobody will deny the power of the high potencies. So great is the power thus developed in medicines that Hahnemann, who claimed to be the discoverer of the process, stated that, although he originally employed ten shakes to each dilution, he was led, by manifold experiments and accurate observations, to settle upon *two*, as much more preferable. (*Organon*, note, p. 221.) He says, in another place: "One drop of tincture of moor-grass of the thirtieth potency, each potency having received twenty shakes, put in jeopardy the life of an infant to whom it was given, while the same medicine, when each dilution has received only two shakes, will cure the disease easily and promptly." He severely criticises those homeopathic physicians who carry their medicines about in fluid form. He undertakes to prove that medicines thus carried must become more highly potentiated by the following statement: "I dissolved one grain of soda in half an ounce of water mixed with a little alcohol, contained in a vial, two-thirds of which it filled; after shaking this solution uninterruptedly for half an hour, it was equal in potentiation and efficacy to the thirtieth development of strength" (*Organon*, note, p. 221). "Even inert substances when submitted to this process become active medicines." (*Organon*, p. 128.)

Homeopathsists do not seem to have been much impressed by these experiences of their master, for they still continue to prescribe ten powerful strokes. The *North American Homeopathic Journal* says: "Everyone who prefers, may make potencies in his own way." Exercising this liberty, Jenichen claimed for his high potency of arsenicum, that it had received one and one-half million most powerful shakings, counting only such as produced a metallic ringing sound of the glass bottle. Boericke and Tafel, on the other hand, employ twelve strokes.

This method of making something out of nothing has been denominated the "dynamization of drugs," but the public will probably conclude that such medicines will have a greater effect upon the health of those who make them than upon that of those who take them. Homeopathsists,

indeed, do not claim that disease is cured by this minute division of the drug acting as a material agent. "Disease," say they, "is spirit-like, and cannot be cured except by spirit-like power concealed in drugs." We are thus prepared for the following statement: "Homeopathic remedies will act with the greatest certainty and efficacy, particularly by smelling or inhaling them in the form of vapor emanating continually from a dry pellet impregnated with a highly rarefied medicinal solution, and contained in a small vial." "This is much superior to all other modes of administering medicines by the mouth." (*Organon*, note, p. 224.)

Hahnemann speaks of a preparation of gold "so developed that a quadrillionth part of a grain may be put in a vial, and if a melancholly person whose disgust of life has brought him to the verge of suicide will breathe it but for a few seconds, in one hour he will be relieved from the wicked demon and restored to a relish of life."

Dr. Herring, of Philadelphia, states that "Jenichen, finding a bottle of the twenty-ninth dilution of sugar of lead, dried up, the cork loose and dry, the idea occurred to him to potentize from the bottle up to the $\frac{1}{200}$. A patient affected with hereditary fetid perspiration of the feet, smelt once of a few globules saturated with this (the $\frac{1}{200}$) potency, and in a few days was permanently cured."

An English observer claims, after many years of anxious experimenting, to have discovered decided results from olfaction, or the smelling of medicines, but more especially by means of medicines contained in closed vials held in the hand. (*Encycl. Brit.* 9th ed. vol. xii, p. 127.)

In an attempt to defend these theories, Boericke and Tafel apologetically say: "Power does not always depend on size; a tiny wood-worm will eat up a man-of-war quicker than a whale would. See yonder tall tower, the work of years; it is destroyed in a moment—a vivid flash, and a peal of thunder, and it is laid in the dust. What an irresistible force! and yet the most delicate balance of the chemist cannot perceive its weight. The quantity of medicine in a homeopathic globule may be infinitesimal—indeed, it is so small that the finest chemical tests fail to detect even a trace of the medicine; but, shall we say that the remedy ceases to exist in the third, fourth, or thirtieth potency, simply because we cannot detect it!"

This reasoning is absurd, since there can be no analogy between living organisms or natural forces and infinitesimal quantities of dead matter.

The reader has thus been carried from the foundation to the very pinnacle of the homeopathic structure. Let him stand a moment upon this giddy height of transcendentalism and consider the following questions: Is it strange that members of the regular profession refuse to give this so-called system of medicine a moment's serious consideration? They are the champions of health; they meet its determined, ever-vigilant

enemy, daily, upon the arena. Why should they lay aside well-trying armor and trusty steel for tinsel garments and a magician's wand? Again, rational physicians are severely criticised for ridiculing homeopathy. But, candidly now, is it just that these actors in life's tragedy should be denied the relaxation of laughing at so screeching a farce?

It has been the custom of the medical profession from time immemorial, in prescribing for diseases, to write recipes, leaving the compounding of the formulæ to the art of the apothecary. Patients have thus remained largely in ignorance of the very names of the drugs which they are using. The popularizing of treatment by homeopathy and the marking of their vials with such names as "Aconite," "Belladonna," "Bryonia," "Mercurius," "Arsenicum," etc., has led to the belief that these medicines were discovered or introduced by homeopaths. Indeed, physicians are frequently accused of practising homeopathically when they make use of them. But, in fact, those that possess active properties were in use, though not in powerless dilutions, long before Hahnemann was born. The *United States Pharmacopeia* furnishes the authoritative list of drugs and medicines in use by the regular profession in this country. They number between two and three hundred. So diligent has been the search of homeopathy for specifics that their official list (*The American Homeopathic Pharmacopeia*) recognizes upward of 800 distinct medicines. To make up this long list, the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms are invaded. Plant life, from the ill-smelling skunk-cabbage to the stately palm and century plant, is brought into requisition.

The mineral world contributes its treasures, even to inert and insoluble substances, such as coal, gold, coral, silica, the emerald, the ruby, etc. These latter substances are reduced to a powder and mixed with milk-sugar and administered as medicine. Even the animal world is a prolific source of homeopathic physic. No more must man curse the snake and the viper, nor the careful housewife wonder for what righteous purpose the good Lord created the fly, the cockroach, the bed-bug, or the louse. Let the discouraged farmer remember that the potato-bug is not only an agricultural pest, but also a medicinal blessing.

The following is a partial list of insects employed in the manufacture of homeopathic medicines: The bed-bug, the head-louse, the plant-louse, the wood-louse, the lady-bug, the potato-bug, the cockroach, the oil-beetle, the honey-bee, the wasp, the ant, the house-fly, various kinds of spiders, etc.

Some of these insects, as, for instance, the cockroach, are mashed and ground up with milk-sugar. Some, as for example the bed-bug, are prepared as follows: "The *living insect*, crushed, is covered with five parts, by weight, of alcohol. Having poured the mixture into a well-stoppered bottle, it is allowed to remain eight days in a dark, cool place, being shaken twice a day. The tincture is then poured off, drained and

filtered." This, of course, is the *mother* tincture. Before being subjected to the soaking described, bees and wasps are first aggravated by shaking.

From among the inhabitants of the sea, the crab, the sponge, the starfish, the eggs of the carp, and the skin of the dolphin are treated much the same as insects.

Certain reptiles, snakes, toads, lizards, and vipers are also utilized. The following is one of the methods employed for extracting the poison from these creatures: "By pressing the poison-gland, the serpent being either pinioned or chloroformed, and as the venom drops from the fangs it is received on pulverized sugar of milk, with which it is triturated, in proportion of one to ninety-nine."

The innocent toad is subjected to the following process: "The live animal is fastened to a slab of cork by four strong pins stuck through the webs of the feet. Then the poles of an induction apparatus, in action, are slowly drawn over the back of the animal, whereupon the poison very soon issues from the dorsal glands. This is removed with a small horn knife and triturated—in the proportion of 1 part to 1000 parts of sugar of milk." A medicine made by mixing the spittle of this animal with sugar of milk is called "*Bufo sahytiensis*." "*Lyssin*" is manufactured in the same way from the saliva of a mad dog.

The fox is quite a useful animal from a homeopathic standpoint, as certain medicines called "*Vulpis fel*," "*Vulpis hepar*," and "*Vulpis pulmo*" are made by grinding up sugar of milk with its bile, liver, and lungs, respectively.

Guano (the excrement of sea birds) makes such an excellent fertilizer that homeopaths have introduced it into their pharmacopeia as a medicine.

"*Castor equorum*" is the blackish excrescence found on the inner side of the fore and hind legs of the horse above the knee and below the hock joints, which readily exfoliates, and on rubbing emits a peculiar odor. The substance is dried, pulverized, and prepared by trituration. "*Cervus brazilicus*" is prepared in the same manner from a piece of the fresh hide of a deer, with the hair on.

"*Mephites*" is thus described: "There is a pouch (near the hinder part of the skunk) where follicular glands deposit an unctuous matter of such pungent and insupportable odor, that at the approach of the animal, at the moment when he squirts this liquor, a person inhaling its vapor is almost stifled. One part by weight of the liquor is dissolved in 99 parts by weight of alcohol."

"*Spriggums martini*" is made by grinding the prickles taken from the sides of the porcupine with milk-sugar. "*Tela araneæ*" is prepared by treating an ordinary cobweb in the same way.

Triturations made by rubbing up the matter from the smallpox pus-

tule with milk-sugar are called "Variolinum." Vaccine matter treated in the same manner produces a medicine denominated "Vaccinum."

Dr. Herring thus describes one of his discoveries: "In the autumn of 1830, I collected the pus from the itch-pustule of a young and otherwise healthy negro. The pustules were full, large, and yellow, particularly between the fingers, on the hands, and forearms. I opened all the mature, unscratched pustules for several days in succession, and collected the pus in a vial with alcohol. After shaking it well and allowing it to stand, I commenced my provings with the tincture on the healthy. Its effects were striking and decided. I administered it to the sick with good results, and sometimes witnessed aggravations. I called this preparation Psorinum."

It is to be remembered that all these preparations, vile as many of them are, are intended for internal medication.

The International Hahnemann Association, at Milwaukee, in June, 1880, made the following declaration:

"Whereas, We believe the *Organon of the Healing Art*, as promulgated by Samuel Hahnemann, to be the only reliable guide in therapeutics; and

"Whereas, This clearly teaches that homeopathy consists in the law of similars; the totality of the symptoms; the single remedy; the minimum dose of the dynamitized drug; and these not singly, but collectively; therefore,

"Resolved, That, as some self-styled homeopaths have taken occasion to traduce Hahnemann as a fanatic; as dishonest and visionary; and his teachings as not being the standard of homeopathy to-day: that we regard all such as recreant to the best interests of homeopathy."

While this proves homeopathy to be the same, in essence, to-day as formerly, it also reveals the fact that the homeopathic school is a house divided. Antagonism to the regular profession is the only bond of union between homeopaths. Upon the doctrines and practices of their own system they are divided into relentless factions. At their conventions and society meetings the only topic which excites universal enthusiasm is abuse of the "old school." Some of the most telling criticisms and violent philippics have been pronounced against homeopathy by adherents of the homeopathic school. A few quotations, taken from homeopathic sources, will serve to show the diversity of opinion upon all the teachings of Hahnemann.

Dr. Wild, Vice-President of the British Homeopathic Society, says: "Hippocrates was right when he said some diseases are best treated by similars and some by contraries, and, therefore, it is unwise and incorrect to assume the title of homeopathist."

Dr. Kidd, one of the leading homeopathic physicians of London, says: "Looking to the observation of facts apart from theoretic speculations, two primary laws of therapeutics unfold themselves—Galen's law, founded upon the rule *contraria contrariis*, and Hahnemann's or the homeopathic law, founded upon the relation of similars."

The Homeopathic Society of New York in 1879, by a vote of thirty-three to fifteen, resolved that in the treatment of disease the formula *Causa sublata tollitur effectus* (cause and effect), is often to be remembered and used to advantage.

In a recent number of the *Homeopathic Monthly*, Dr. Dake makes the broad statement that the law of similars is not applicable to any diseases which are characterized by destruction of tissues, or where the cause cannot be removed, or to such as are due to chemical action, mechanical violence, or unhygienic surroundings.

The *Medical Investigator* (a homeopathic publication), in 1876, said, reprovingly: "How many claiming to be homeopaths are entirely disregarding the law of *similia*. It is getting to be quite a rare thing to hear of a homeopathic practitioner conducting a serious case from beginning to end without using, as such, cathartics, sudorifics, diuretics, etc., in direct opposition to our law." (*Encycl. Brit.*, 9th ed.)

Dr. Sharp, of Rugby, while admitting the doctrine of *similia*, requires that it "have regard not to mere symptoms, but to the seat and pathology of the case."

Says a writer in the *Homeopathic Times* (January, 1878): "In my judgment we have sufficient evidence to warrant us in the belief that many diseases are removed when drugs are administered, which, if taken by a person in health, would produce certain morbid conditions resembling the existing disease; I say morbid conditions in contradistinction to the host of symptoms gathered from the patient. . . . Any system of medication that proposes to use drugs, which in their minute details resemble the endless phases of diseased action, lays down a proposition utterly repugnant to common sense . . ."

In regard to provings, this same writer says: "To give one or more persons a drug, and register all their peculiar fancies and ideas, does not furnish any reliable evidence of the real effects of the drug. . . . The voluminous compilation of Prof. Allen . . . is entirely impracticable and calculated to mislead the unwary."

A committee appointed by the New York Homeopathic Medical Society, at its meeting in 1879, reported to the annual meeting the following year that, after an extensive correspondence with the profession throughout the State, it found a diversity of opinion concerning the reliability of provings made with attenuated medicines.

These quotations are sufficient to show the discord among homeopaths upon their cardinal principles. But the internecine strife seems to wage hottest about the doctrine of the dynamization of drugs.

Says one homeopathist: "The question of potencies seems to have aroused a spirit of contention in the homeopathic fraternity about as bitter as any between the old and the new."

In the preface to the fifth American edition of the *Organon* occur

these words: "Not only physicians of experience, but laymen and especially beginners, whose judgment on medical matters is in its period of incubation, are divided, by relentless partisan spirit, upon the question of dose, into high dilutionists and low dilutionists."

In the preceding pages it has been shown that dilution and dynamization are inseparably interwoven with true homeopathy. In spite of this fact, *The Homeopathic Times* of 1878 says: "The heresy of high dilutions should have no place in our creed, nor home in our school, if we desire to advance and expand our influence, and secure for it public regard and confidence, because it cannot be demonstrated by any known method that either medicinal power or presence exists in the exalted attenuations." In this opinion Dr. Kidd, before referred to, evidently concurs, as he says: "I have cast aside dynamized drugs *in toto*, as untrustworthy and unjust to the sick."

Thus held together by this rope of sand, called homeopathy, are at least three distinct classes, namely:

- 1st. Those who hold to the teachings of Hahnemann unmodified.
- 2d. Those who accept *similia* as one of two therapeutic laws.
- 3d. Those who repudiate high dilutions.⁵

Though Hahnemann admitted that cures had been wrought before his time, he claimed, in all such cases, that the doctor had accidentally and ignorantly administered a remedy which acted upon the principle of *similia similibus curantur*. Few of his followers at the present day make so sweeping a claim. They rather admit the existence of two methods of treatment, and seek to establish the superiority of their own. They aim to create in the popular mind a belief that *regular* physicians use nauseating and powerful drugs in excessive quantities, while they accomplish the same, or even better results, by very small doses of simple, though potent, remedies. They inform their patrons that the "old school" resorts to severe measures, such as bleeding, purging, sweating, vomiting, and the like, while *they* condemn such methods as absolutely harmful, and give more especial attention to hygienic and dietetic rules. Persistent misrepresentation and abuse of the regular profession has alienated not a few of the intelligent class from their allegiance to scientific medicine.

But these statements, made by the enemies of rational medicine, are the exact reverse of the truth. Regular physicians have ever regarded their art as but the handmaid of Nature. Their reliance has always been upon her restorative power. (*Vis medicatrix naturæ.*) Therefore, in the treatment of disease, a scrupulous regard is paid to the laws of health. Food easily digested and nutritious, cleanliness, pure air, rest, and sleep are deemed by them of prime importance. Drugs are used to stimulate or retard natural processes, and only in such quantities as experience has demonstrated to be necessary to produce the desired

result. So-called *heroic* treatment is pursued in such cases only as demand rapid, bold, and decisive measures.

The *Organon*, on the contrary, distinctly teaches that "Nature is powerless in the presence of disease, which can only be cured by means of medicines" (p. 104). Hahnemann, indeed, reproved physicians for trying to imitate what he chose to call "Nature's bungling processes" (p. 28), and homeopathy has been denominated the "specific" school of medicine, because its advocates claim that a distinct medicine exists for the cure of each distinct set of symptoms.

In view of these considerations, may not the assertion of the author of homeopathy be reversed? Is it not true that no disorder was ever affected either for good or ill by such treatment? As a system of therapeutics it is positively inert. It is simply *no* treatment.

That patients recover while taking no medicine, other than homeopathic dilutions, is readily explained by the fact that many diseases have an intrinsic tendency to recovery. Indeed, it has been estimated by some that, with proper care, eighteen out of every twenty sick people coming under the observation of physicians, would get well without any medicine whatever. There are cases which receive little or no benefit from active medication. The curative principle is faith, implicit faith, in the means employed. It is not proposed here to discuss their pathology. In ancient times they were cured by amulets, charms, incantations, and spells. In these days the same results are obtained by a resort to clairvoyancy, mind-cures, faith-cures, and homeopathy. But there are patients who have not the requisite degree of faith, and there are diseases which tend to a *fatal* termination. Under these circumstances the majority of homeopathic practitioners abandon their theories, discard their dilutions, fall back upon the researches of rational medicine, and administer drugs in full doses.

It will be noticed that all homeopaths are not charged with being false to their professions. Just as every religious, political, or social heresy, no matter how unreasonable or absurd, has fascinated or led captive some minds, so this medical delusion has its honest believers. It cannot be denied, however, that the practices of most homeopaths warrant the inference that they have no faith in their professed theories, and have assumed their distinctive title merely for the sake of obtaining business. While denouncing the regular profession and claiming to cure disease by methods totally different, their libraries are filled with the works of those whose methods they decry, and their laboratories are stocked with a full line of official drugs and pharmaceutical preparations. The inspection of the prescription files of apothecaries will abundantly sustain the charge that homeopaths use drugs in the same manner as rational physicians, though the nature of their medicines is more frequently concealed by reason of the fact that they themselves *compound* and dispense them without the instrumentality of the druggist.

Not long since the author was called to the bedside of a young lady, who was under treatment by a prominent homeopathist. He discovered that, among other things, she was taking under his direction 20 grains of quinine a day, occasional 10-grain doses of antipyrin, and 10 drops of Fowler's solution of arsenic every four hours. The patient was then suffering from arsenical poisoning, of which she shortly afterward died.

Where is the homeopathist who abstains from the use of lotions, liniments, and salves, though such applications are contrary to the very essence of his system-and the explicit teaching of his master? (*Organon*, p. 150 *et seq.*) How many homeopathic doctors can testify to not owning or using a hypodermatic syringe, or having administered morphine as an anodyne? Can even one truthfully deny having yielded to the temptation of controlling a paroxysm of ague by a full dose of quinine? If these imputations are well founded, what further proof of insincerity can be demanded? That they are well founded may be ascertained by reference to homeopathic publications themselves.

In the *Clinique* of August, 1880, Dr. Ludlam, of the Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital, reports a case of ovariectomy. In addition to a large number of the usual homeopathic remedies, he administered from six to eight grains of quinine, and from a sixth to a third of a grain of morphine daily, besides keeping constantly upon the wound a compress wet with carbolized cosmolin and glycerin.

In the *North American Journal of Homeopathy* of August, 1887, appears an article by Dr. Moffat, of Brooklyn, upon "Inflammation of the Bladder." His description of the treatment might have been copied, bodily, from any work on *regular* treatment, except that, in addition, he proceeds to recommend the use of no less than 55 homeopathic preparations. In reference to homeopathic treatment, he says: "Our failures to cure [are] attributable to the ignorance or carelessness of the prescriber and not to any limitation in the application of the law [of *similia*]." He then states it to be the duty of homeopathic doctors to use such other treatment as has proved beneficial.

In this same number of the *Journal*, the editor reverses the facts of medical history in a labored attempt to show that homeopathists ought not to be criticised for deviating from their exclusive practice. In the next number, however, occur these words: "We are winning our place in the community and also in the profession at large by a steadfast adherence to our principles, while those who try to ride the fence and 'practise both ways' lose all respect."

The reader will perceive that while rational treatment is being pursued, homeopathic dilutions are not discarded. On the contrary, during the entire course of the sickness they are faithfully administered; the attention of the patient is assiduously called to their use, and every improvement in his condition is attributed to their effect. If a disease

is mild and tends toward recovery the doctor may use nothing but his dilutions, leaving the case to Nature and relying upon a fact, difficult to explain, that even a charlatan will receive more credit if a patient recovers under his care from a protracted illness, than will a reputable physician for cutting short the same or a graver malady in a few days.

The task of homeopaths seems to be not so much to cure disease effectively and quickly as, by any and every means or device, to prejudice the popular mind against scientific medicine, and thus enlarge their own constituency.

Says the *New York Medical Gazette* of May 22, 1880: "Some six months ago our attention was called, by one of the inmates, to certain abuses which were being carried on in the Homeopathic Hospital on Ward's Island. At first we thought that the statements were made vindictively, believing that, no matter how much the homeopaths might differ from us in matters purely medical, they still were gentlemen, and had as keen a sense of gentlemanly honor as any of us. It seems, however, that among the lights in the homeopathic ranks there are to be found men who will stoop to do and to sanction acts so contemptible that the greatest criminal would blush to be thought guilty of. And yet these men call themselves gentlemen. We have of late been investigating the charges with a view of collecting proof sufficiently overwhelming to justify us in bringing the matter before the Legislature, but the ubiquitous newspaper reporter has given the whole story to the public rather prematurely for our plans. Here it is, copied from one of our leading dailies: 'On Ward's Island (N. Y. City) is the Homeopathic Hospital. This was the first public hospital ever secured by the homeopaths, and it is costing the taxpayers of the city \$60,000 a year. The homeopaths, so it is alleged, discovered that the convalescent patients at the other hospitals got passes to go to and from the city, and at once utilized the discovery. Instead of giving passes, the applicant was told to go, and when returning, to call at the Commissioners' office and get a new permit. Thus, it is said that the same patient often counted as two, three, four, or more patients admitted. Numbers of them were sent out in this manner a dozen times. By this means the admissions and discharges (as cured) were increased 300 per cent., and the percentages of deaths, of course, was correspondingly low. The mortality in the three leading hospitals, the first year after the Homeopathic started, was: Bellevue Hospital, 12½ per cent.; Charity Hospital, 8½ per cent.; Homeopathic Hospital, 6 per cent. On the publication of this result homeopathic organs grew jubilant. The same course was pursued the ensuing year, and the result (on paper) was about the same, while all the time the actual percentage, it is declared, was about 18. After nearly three years of this adroit management the Commissioners began to find it very troublesome to be issuing so many fresh permits to the *same individuals*, so an order was issued to let parties wanting passes

have them. But the homeopaths were equal to the emergency, and the next device, it is alleged, was to discharge the sick and keep the healthy in the building. This piece of strategy, it is said, has been carried out during the past year, and when the annual report for 1879 is published the mortality report of the Homeopathic Hospital will once more appear (on paper) astonishingly low.' ”

It is a curious coincidence, to say the least, that the author has been informed by a medical friend, who was, at about this time, serving as interne in the Kings County Hospital, that a colored patient was there admitted, suffering from the worst form of mercurial salivation, who declared that he had just been discharged, as cured, from the Ward's Island Hospital.

The recent controversy between the superintendent of this same hospital and the New York Homeopathic Medical Society is fresh in the minds of many. The Society charged the superintendent with treating the inmates of the institution according to the methods of the regular profession. He admitted the truth of the charge, but rejoined that in so doing he but followed the example of the members of the Society in their private practice. The counter-charge was not denied, but the claim set up that he, in his representative capacity, was not at liberty to thus use his discretion. The superintendent, however, maintained that it was his duty to cure his patients by the employment of whatever methods he deemed most efficacious, and the Commissioners sustained him in his position.⁶

Regardless of the facts set forth in the foregoing pages, the number of the patrons of homeopathy is by no means insignificant. There would be nothing strange that a system so absurd, even if clearly understood, should gain a certain support; for there is not a cancer quack or a vendor of patent nostrums but can overwhelm you with testimonials from very respectable people. “Charlatanism,” says Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, “always hobbles on two crutches—the tattle of women and the certificates of clergymen.” But that this so-called system of medicine should command so large a following can only be explained by the existence of a widespread and unintelligent prejudice. Every person, however, who employs a homeopathic doctor, believes his choice to be founded upon the maturest judgment, and is ever ready to give a reason for his faith. It will be interesting, and it is to be hoped instructive, to pass in review some of the more common of the apologies given by persons for their support of this system.

That the medicines are easy to take is alleged by many as the reason for their homeopathic preferences. This clearly assumes the existence of diverse methods of treatment, each possessing positive value. Suppose, merely for the sake of argument, that to be the case. What possible motive would induce the great body of physicians to cling to that method, making use of nauseating drugs to the entire exclusion of that

which accomplishes as good results with tasteless remedies? Every intelligent physician appreciates the fact that it is to his interest to disguise the unpleasant taste of medicine, and to this end he invokes the aid of the apothecary's art. But if he be conscientious as well as intelligent, he will not permit self-interest to so far triumph over duty as to cater to his patient's palate rather than minister to his health.

Substances used as medicines are, as a rule, if taken in excessive quantities, violent poisons. In civilized society we are warned of their nature by the labels upon the bottles or boxes containing them. To primitive man, however, their bitter, acrid, or burning taste was the only indication of their noxious properties. This is still true of infants and the lower animals, and, in a greater or lesser degree, of the savage tribes. Even the narcotic drugs, such as alcohol, tobacco, opium, and the like, which are quite subtle in their effects, demand a certain education of the senses before they can be tolerated. Thus, the Creator of all things, for a manifestly wise purpose, imparted to drugs their unpleasant taste and odor, and, generally speaking, medicines are easy to take in just the proportion to which they are deprived of all therapeutic value.

Not infrequently people are heard to say that they have no confidence in homeopathic treatment for adults, but regard it as very good for children. This must be based upon the erroneous notion that the distinction between homeopathic and rational treatment has reference merely to the size of the dose. The posology of rational medicine is based upon the axiom that "men are but children of a larger growth." The proper amount of any drug to be administered in any case has been most carefully determined by an examination into the respective tolerance for it of people of all ages and conditions of life. Homeopathy depends solely upon the truth or falsity of the doctrine of *similia*. The peculiarity of the patient as to age, sex, or condition can in no way affect its value as a method of treatment. The question to be determined has reference only to the selection of the remedy. The size of the dose seems to be considered immaterial. The little books called *Reper-
tories*, accompanying homeopathic medicine-cases, are very minute in their description of the symptoms indicating the use of various remedies, but the dose and the potency receive comparatively no attention. Boericke and Tafel state that "the dose of all the remedies is the same, to wit: for an adult, six pellets, or two drops of the tincture; for a child, half the quantity; for an infant, one-fourth that quantity;" though no data are furnished by which we may determine when the infant becomes a child or the child matures into adult life. Even less regard is paid to potency. Number three, four, six, or whatever may be preferred, is used indiscriminately, regardless of the fact that three is just one million times as strong as six. The infant taking one-half drop of three would get two hundred and fifty thousand times more medicine than the adult
"two drops of six. Hahnemann, however, with an air of scientific

accuracy, states (*Organon*, note, p. 222) that the same quantity of a dilution containing $\frac{1}{10}$ of a grain is only eight times as strong as one containing $\frac{1}{100000000}$ of a grain. Why do not those admirers of Hahnemann's genius, who demand that his medical theories should be taught in our universities, claim a similar recognition of his system of mathematics?

Doubtless the real reason why homeopathic treatment is so popular for children rests upon the fact that the medicines may be administered with less assertion of parental authority.

Of similar import is the statement often made by persons, that they employ homeopathy in slight ailments, but always send for an "allopathic" doctor as soon as a case assumes grave features. The reason why homeopathy seems to cure only simple disorders is quite apparent. Nature, unaided, is able to triumph over the multitude of trifling derangements of health. When medical interference becomes necessary, homeopathy is of no avail. But what seem to be slight ailments may eventuate in something of a more serious character, and in such cases it is criminal to waste in procrastination what may be golden moments. Let no one whose neglect has been followed by fatal consequences seek to appease the chidings of an aroused conscience by pleading the use of homeopathic treatment.

Supposed economy is the powerful inducement to many people. Say they: "It costs as much or more than the doctor's fee to obtain the drugs he orders, while the homeopathist brings his medicines with him and furnishes them without any additional charge." This is cheapness rather than economy. If the treatment is comparatively valueless, a resort to it is not economical, and, if it is inert, to employ it is the height of extravagance. But it is not even cheaper, if, as is charged, homeopathic doctors magnify the gravity of their cases and multiply the number of their visits. Says Dr. Cathell, of Baltimore: "They elevate what you call a slight cold or a quinsy into a 'congestion of the lungs,' or a 'bronchial catarrh,' or a 'touch of pneumonia,' 'diphtheria,' or 'post-nasal catarrh.' They dignify what you would call a disordered stomach into a 'gastric affection,' a wind-colic into 'borborygmus,' etc., for the cure of which huge ailments they are fully credited and fully paid." It is certainly not uncommon for ailments which have long resisted homeopathic medication to disappear like magic upon a resort to simple though rational treatment.

"I favor homeopathy," says one, "not because I deem the medicine of much value, but because it is harmless, and I do not believe in taking much medicine." Why should a person of such superior judgment ever employ a doctor at all? It is not to be supposed, certainly, that any physician will give potent medicines unless they are clearly indicated. But if the patient may be benefited by the judicious use of drugs, would not wisdom, nay, ordinary prudence, suggest the employ-

ment of a physician who understands their nature, and with a confidence begotten of such knowledge proceeds to their proper administration?

As a rule, homeopathic doses are repeated at very short intervals. Many, therefore, suppose that an appreciable quantity of the medicine is thus, in time, obtained, but by a safer and less objectionable method of administration. This is an entire misconception. Some drugs produce the best results when given frequently in small doses, others when given in full doses at longer intervals. In the majority of cases it is immaterial which method is employed, and the convenience of the patient may be consulted. But to get an appreciable quantity of any drug carried to the third homeopathic potency, it would be necessary to take a dose every successive second for over eleven days. If the interval between the doses were half an hour, it would be necessary to continue the medicine for over half a century.

There is a class of men who are the would-be apostles of progress. They say they do not believe in the absurdities of Hahnemann, and have no doubt that, in time, homeopathy will cease to exist as a separate school of medicine. They are aware of the fact that most intelligent homeopaths have virtually abandoned the doctrine of *similia* and follow the teachings of rational medicine. But they adhere to the homeopathic school because of its "progressive" notions, and for the reason that it has lifted medical science from the slough of inactivity and infused into it new life.

Homeopathy came upon the stage at a time when the depleting and stimulating theories were striving for the mastery. Both, carried to extremes, were bad. Homeopathy had the negative merit of non-interference. It was a time ripe for the advancing of any medical dogma. The apparent success of homeopathy was but the favorable contrast of no medication with bad medication. It served to open the eyes of the profession and hasten the era of practical as opposed to theoretic medicine. It was the top-stone of the tower of error, and brought the already tottering structure to the ground. That it should be held in esteem for this service calls to mind the apostolic exclamation: "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" As well foster poverty and pauperism to encourage benevolence, or cultivate vice that by contrast the beauties of virtue may appear more glorious. It may be true that the effort to dislodge so formidable a parasite aroused the profession to greater activity and led to the earlier discovery of valuable truths, but the influence of homeopathy upon the progress of medical science has, at the most, been indirect, since, as a system, it never promulgated a single discovery which has been accepted by the profession at large. Inasmuch as the greatest progress has been made in those countries where the influence of this schism has been least felt, it may be suspected, as probably true, that the existence of homeopathy

and the advance in the medical sciences during the past half-century are merely coincidences and in no way correlated.

Some claim to base their preference upon a comparison of the practical results of homeopathic with those of rational treatment; but there are as many who have abandoned the system for this same reason. Persons converted into a belief in homeopathy frequently return to their former allegiance, and assign as the reason for both changes their observation of the results of treatment. Non-interference is better than bad treatment; therefore, real benefit may accrue from the dismissal of an injudicious physician and the employment of a homeopathist. This is especially true if the latter be a homeopathist in name only.

Many, again, have been won to homeopathy by the domestic use of the remedies. For every imaginary as well as many real, though trifling, ailments the little pills are taken, and if the disorder passes away or is forgotten, the medicine is credited with the result. It is amusing to see such people carrying little vials of medicine with them almost constantly, and taking the pellets with the most scrupulous regard as to number and interval.

It is as absurd for the *laity* to institute comparisons in medical matters as for a blind man to judge of color. But *doctors* who have deserted the regular profession and espoused the cause of homeopathy are frequently heard to draw comparisons between the results of their practice before and after their conversion, to the prejudice of the former. Probably they do less harm as homeopathists. Drugs, like edged tools, are dangerous except in skilful hands. Teachers in medical colleges sometimes advise certain of the candidates for graduation, if they persist in practising medicine, to adopt homeopathy. Better for humanity if some practitioners had adopted this disinterested advice earlier in their professional career. It is admitted that homeopathic sins of omission may not be attended by as disastrous consequences as "allopathic" sins of commission.

Homeopathists are constantly claiming that their system gains by comparison; but a comparative test, to be of any value whatever, must be made with scientific exactness and under the supervision of competent judges. Homeopathists have never proposed such a test, but, on the contrary, have resisted the repeated attempts on the part of the regular profession to secure an impartial investigation of their doctrines, comparative or otherwise. No sooner had Hahnemann announced his alleged discovery than it was thoroughly tested in every medical center of the world, and its worthlessness thus early demonstrated.

In 1835, M. Andral, in a paper read before the French Academy of Medicine, stated that he had conducted experiments during a space of time extending over nearly a year; that he could reckon over one hundred and thirty cases recorded with perfect fairness in a great hospital, under the eye of numerous witnesses; that he had obtained his

remedies from a well-accredited homeopathic pharmacy; that the regimen prescribed by Hahnemann had been rigorously observed; that he had studied the books and the practice of homeopaths and conscientiously followed their guidance, and yet, though he had administered such boasted articles as aconite, belladonna, etc., he could not see that they produced any effect whatever. This accords perfectly with the fact that infants and children have frequently been known to consume the entire contents of homeopathic medicine-cases without any perceptible effect being produced.

Homeopathy has been on trial before the world's jury for three-quarters of a century. If half claimed for it by its author had been true, it would have displaced all other methods of treatment years ago; but, on the contrary, the system itself is practically dead—the name only survives. It was announced at a time when medical art was in a sad decline by reason of existing feuds and internal strife; therefore, it was received with considerable enthusiasm. Not a few physicians professed conversion to its dogmas. Among them were some of intelligence and capacity, whose names were a tower of strength, and whose judgment and skill were attended with flattering results. These men, however, rejected many of the fantastic notions of Hahnemann; they were a law unto themselves; they were even reprov'd and disown'd by the author of homeopathy. But these exceptional cases have made more prominent the fact that the mass of homeopathic practitioners has been recruited from among uneducated laymen and unsuccessful physicians. This is especially true in the United States. When the schism first made its appearance in this country, most of its practitioners were men from the common walks of life, with no medical training whatever. In some instances families, supplied with their homeopathic medicine-cases and books of instruction, dispensed entirely with the services of medical men. Since homeopaths have organized and established colleges and schools, this condition of affairs has been somewhat improved. Many of the more intelligent classes are numbered among its practitioners and patrons. It must be admitted, however, that, as a class, homeopathic doctors are sadly deficient in literary as well as scientific qualifications.

The considerable number of the practitioners of homeopathy depends in part, at least, upon the fact that it opens a door of easy entrance into practice. Hence it resists attempts to advance the standards of medical education. An atmosphere of scientific investigation is unfavorable to its growth. It does not thrive under State supervision, and every act of restrictive legislation is a nail in its coffin. In Germany, its birth-place, it is under the ban of the law. Homeopaths are not permitted to practise as physicians, and the system is universally condemned by the intelligent classes. In England it is not strong. "There are said to be 105 homeopathic practitioners in London. In Great Britain and

Ireland, with a population of 35,000,000, there are but 275. Liverpool and Glasgow, with about 500,000 population each, have, respectively, 15 and 5 homeopathic doctors." In America homeopathy has had its hot-bed. "Some estimate the proportion of homeopathic practitioners in the States as being one-eighth of the whole number of legally qualified physicians. It is probable that the differences in the systems of medical education and qualification in the two countries have something to do with this difference in numbers. In the United States homeopathy has naturally had freer scope than in Europe. Every State determines for itself the conditions of qualification in medicine; and there is thus a vast number of separate medical schools giving both education and diplomas. Consequently, there is a serious inequality in the severity of medical education and examination." "In all countries the doctrine of homeopathy is still without broad scientific recognition." (*Encycl. Brit.*, 9th ed., vol. xii, pp. 127, 128.) It is not taught nor even mentioned in the medical department of any of the great universities of the "Old World." This is true of the representative colleges of our country also. Of schools specially established to teach the doctrines of Hahnemann there is not one in Germany, and but one in Great Britain. In the United States there exist a number of these schools in varying degrees of prosperity. Happily they are not increasing in number, and are decreasing in patronage.

Homeopaths have never risen to distinction in the medical profession. Search the list of the honorable dead for the names of those whose memory is revered for their service to medical science; search in vain for a disciple of Hahnemann. Mention the names inseparably connected with medical discovery; call over those which are universally accepted as authority upon medical questions; there is not a homeopathist among the number. They are not to be found in places of distinction, nor employed in the military service of governments or the health boards of cities. If homeopathy ever established a laboratory for the purpose of investigation in biologic science it has never been heard of, and not one of the discoveries of modern times has emanated from such a source. Upon the shelves of the world's great libraries is not to be found a single standard volume of scientific merit upon any medical topic written by a homeopathist.

Hahnemann, driven from the court of Science, appealed to the people. His cause has been kept a popular one ever since. His disciples have ever avoided a scientific discussion of their doctrines. In view of these facts, how can any intelligent person or lover of true science countenance homeopathy for a moment? If he does, his conduct is indefensible.⁷

There are those who admit all that has been said in these pages about homeopathy. They do not believe in the doctrines of Hahnemann. They are aware that their physician, though nominally a believer in

do not practise according to its rules. They will tell a man of intelligence, perhaps a college graduate; he is respected in the community and active in the church; they admire his methods of practice; he writes prescriptions just as we do; they have his word for the fact that he uses someopathic tinctures; his practice seems to be attended with success; he has done well in their families; they like him socially, and they think they should not employ him as a doctor.

But, among the guardians of our morals, the ministry, are the most ardent supporters of quackery in its various forms. They are frequently the most active churchmen. Those who fatten themselves on the piety of their fellows, like the wolf in sheep's clothing, are the greatest enemies of piety. The attitude of the ministry is best explained by their lack of judgment in things temporal, and their tendency to be influenced by the immaterial, unreal, and mysterious. The pulpit, to be sure, should be silent upon the scientific merit of homeopathy, but should hurl its anathemas against homeopaths in name only—the medical highwaymen, who with one hand grasp the throat of the profession, and with the other appropriate its possessions.

This phase of the question is moral, and the conscience of the community cannot be better addressed than in the language of Dr. Hooker, late of Norwich, Conn.: "The most important lesson which needs to be learned by the community is in relation to their duty of sustaining the medical profession. It is obviously as true of medicine as it is of any other science that its advancement can be best promoted by securing for the work of its investigation a well-educated body of men, and any encouragement which is accorded to quackery in any form or to any sect which comes out in opposition to the regular profession tends to defeat this desirable object. Homeopaths aim to destroy the medical profession, and substitute in its place a mere sect bound together by an ephemeral folly.

"In view of these considerations we ask the intelligent and influential in the community to decide whether they will consent to encourage this radicalism in medicine, or whether they will unite in throwing around the medical profession all those safeguards which are needed to secure its advancement and enable it to deliver society from the evils of quackery. The issue is distinct and clear. Every man's influence is thrown into one scale or the other. It is not a light thing that a man does who gives his countenance to delusion and quackery, even though it be but a momentary act, an exception to his ordinary treatment of the medical profession. He lends, by this act, his sanction to the whole imposture which the opposers of a well-educated profession have hurled Hahnemann down to the most ignorant of village quacks or the most dishonest seller of patent nostrums, are endeavoring to foist upon the community."

